

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 USNATO 00462 01 OF 02 161939Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-12
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 TRSE-00 IO-13
EB-08 NRC-05 OES-07 SOE-02 DOE-11 NSCE-00 SSO-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 /105 W
-----024136 162011Z /45

O 161821Z JAN 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8717
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 00462

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, PARM, UR
SUBJECT: BREZHNEV LETTER TO ICELANDIC PRIME MINISTER
ON ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON

REF: USNATO 416 (DTG 141235Z JAN 78)
1. THERE FOLLOWS THE TEXT OF THE LETTER DATED 5 JANUARY
1978 FROM BREZHNEV TO ICELANDIC PRIME MINISTER HALLGRIMSSON
ON THE ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON, TO WHICH THE ICELANDIC
REP REFERRED AT JANUARY 13 POLAD'S MEETING (REFTEL). THE
ICELANDIC DELEGATION HAS CIRCULATED COPIES OF THE LETTER
TO ALL PERMREPS.

2. BEGIN TEXT (ICELANDIC TRANSLATION):
CONFIDENTIAL

. ESTEEMED MR. PRIME-MINISTER,

. I FIND IT NECESSARY TO APPROACH YOU ON A QUESTION
WHICH ACQUIRES CONSIDERABLE ACUITY IN THE PRESENT INTER-
NATIONAL SITUATION THE QUESTION OF NEUTRON WEAPON. IT IS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USNATO 00462 01 OF 02 161939Z

THE FOCUS OF ATTENTION NOT ONLY OF GOVERNMENTS, PARLIA-
MENTS AND MILITARY DEPARTMENTS, BUT ALSO OF THE MASSES,
PARTIES, PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS. THIS ISSUE REQUIRES
COMPLETE FRANKNESS.

. YOU, MR. PRIME-MINISTER, IS AWARE OF OUR STAND
TOWARDS THE PLAN OF NEUTRON WEAPON DEVELOPMENT AND ITS

STATIONING IN WESTERN EUROPE. IT IS DISTINCTLY NEGATIVE. AS A MATTER OF FACT SUCH DEVELOPMENT OPENS A NEW CHANNEL OF ARMS RACE WITH ITS ALL PERILOUS CONSEQUENCES, DELIVERS A HEAVY BLOW TO THE HOPES OF PEOPLES FOR ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WAR THREAT. IT IS IN THIS SITUATION, WHEN THE VITAL INTEREST OF PEOPLES AND COUNTRIES ARE AT STAKE, DO I APPROACH YOU AND LEADERS OF A NUMBER OF OTHER STATES, PARTICIPATED IN THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE.

. IT IS A MATTER OF COMMON KNOWLEDGE, THAT DURING NATO MEETING IN DECEMBER, THE US REPRESENTATIVES PRESSED PERSISTENTLY FOR THEIR EUROPEAN ALLIES' CONSENT TO STATION NEUTRON WEAPON ON THEIR TERRITORIES.

. ANXIETY IS PERTAINING TO THE FACT HOW THEY REACT ON ALL THIS IN HIGHER CIRCLES OF WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES THEMSELVES. IF DOUBT AND HESITATION IS STILL MAINTAINED ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL, THE MILITARY OFFICIALS ARE ALREADY DISCUSSING PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF STATIONING THE NEUTRON BOMB IN EUROPE AND ITS FUTURE UTILIZATION. ATTEMPTS ARE MADE TO DIMINISH ARISEN DANGER.

. I WILL SAY IT STRAIGHT: SUCH ATTEMPTS CAN BE REGARDED BY US ONLY AS STRIVING FOR CONFUSING THOSE WHO IS NOW ANXIOUS ABOUT GROWING DANGER AND WHO ARE RAISING THEIR
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USNATO 00462 01 OF 02 161939Z

VOICES OF PROTEST EVER LOUDER AGAINST THE NEUTRON BOMB. COULD ONE REALLY BELIEVE THAT NEUTRON WEAPON, IF LAUNCHED INTO ACTION, WILL BE EMPLOYED ON A LIMITED SCALE, ONLY ON A BATTLE FIELD AND ONLY AGAINST THIS OR ANOTHER FIGHTING ARM? IF ONE HAS TO THINK IN MILITARY CATEGORIES IT MUST BE CLEAR THAT UNDER CONDITIONS OF SUCH A CONFLICT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD DICTATE ITS LOGIC OF ACTIONS FROM THIS OR THE OTHER SIDE.

. AND BY ITS NATURE, BY ITS DESTRUCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS THE NEUTRON WEAPON CAN HIT NOT ONLY MEN IN MILITARY UNIFORM BUT HUGE MASSES OF POPULATION. IT IS INHUMAN WEAPON OF MASS DESTRUCTION AIMED AT PEOPLE. ITS DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT LESSEN THE PROBABILITY OF NUCLEAR CONFLICT, BUT STRENGTHEN IT. REALITY IS SUCH THAT IN CASE OF USE OF NEUTRON WEAPON, A RUINOUS SCYTHE WOULD GO ALONG THE TERRITORY OF WHOLE COUNTRIES WITHOUT LEAVING PROBABLY NOT A SINGLE INCH INTACT.

. MOREOVER, IF TODAY THE NEUTRON WEAPON IS SUPPOSED TO BE USED WITH SPECIFIC DELIVERY SYSTEMS, TOMORROW, THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW DELIVERY SYSTEMS OF DIFFERENT OPERATION

RANGE COULD BE EQUIPPED WITH IT. TODAY THIS WEAPON POSSESS A CERTAIN POWER, BUT TOMORROW - TENS, HUNDREDS TIMES AS MUCH. THIS IS THE LAW OF ARMS RACE AS SOON AS ONE SIDE INTENDS TO START ITS NEW ROUND.

. ALREADY NOW THE PLANS, WHICH ARE BOUND UP WITH THE NEUTRON WEAPON, ADVERSELY AFFECTS THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE, WHILE THEIR IMPLEMENTATION WOULD BRING ABOUT EVEN MORE DRAWBACKS. IN WHAT LIGHT THEN THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS ON A NUMBER OF MAJOR QUESTIONS CONCERNING ARMS RACE LIMITATION WOULD APPEAR IF THE NEUTRON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 USNATO 00462 02 OF 02 161943Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-12
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 TRSE-00 IO-13
EB-08 NRC-05 OES-07 SOE-02 DOE-11 NSCE-00 SSO-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 /105 W
-----024162 162011Z /45

O 161821Z JAN 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8718
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 USNATO 00462

WEAPON IS DEPLOYED SIMULTANEOUSLY? IN THIS CASE NOT MUCH OF THE PEOPLE'S HOPE FOR THE WAYS OF SOLUTION OF DISARMAMENT PROBLEMS AND SUCCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE LEFT.

. AND NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES IN A VARIETY OF CASES WOULD BE PUT UNDER THE DANGER OF BREAKDOWN.

. WHAT MUTUAL CONFIDENCE, WHAT COOPERATION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST IN SOLUTION OF THE GREAT TASK OF LIBERATION OF PEOPLES FROM NUCLEAR DANGER COULD WE SPEAK ABOUT, IF ONE SIDE MAKES STAKES AT NEW REFINED WEAPON, AIMED, AND IT IS NOT CONCEALED, AT THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES?

. WHAT WOULD BE THE REAL VALUE OF DETENTE POLICY IF REALIZATION OF PLANS AROUND THE NEUTRON BOMB ALL THE SAME

BEGINS? MUCH OF THE USEFUL FOR COOPERATION AND SECURITY
IN EUROPE ACHIEVED WITH SUCH A GREAT EFFORT IN RECENT
YEARS INCLUDING THIS OF COMMON EFFORTS OF ALL THE
PARTICIPANT STATES OF ALL-EUROPEAN CONFERENCE, WOULD GO
TO RACK AND RUIN.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USNATO 00462 02 OF 02 161943Z

.
. OF COURSE, DECISION ON LAUNCHING THE NEUTRON WEAPON
INTO PRODUCTION AND STATIONING IT IN WESTERN EUROPE
DEPENDS TO A LARGE EXTENT ON THE USA. BUT IT IS CLEAR,
THAT NOT TO A LESSER EXTENT IT WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE
POSITION OF ALL NATO MEMBERS AND THE DECISION IS OF THE
CHARACTER, WHEN CHAIN OF EVENTS WHICH EVENTUALLY
CONNECTED WITH RISK OF DEVASTATION OF ENTIRE COUNTRIES,
DEATH OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, IS SET IN MOTION.

. RESPONSIBILITY IS EXCLUSIVELY HIGH. IF CHOICE IS
MADE IN FAVOUR OF THE NEUTRON BOMB, IT WOULD PUT THE
SOVIET UNION BEFORE THE NECESSITY TO ANSWER THE CHALLENGE
I.E. TO ACT SO AS WE WERE FORCED TO WHEN ATOMIC WEAPON
HAD BEEN CREATED. THIS I CONSIDER NECESSARY TO SAY ONCE
MORE AND WITH ALL DETERMINATION. WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO
FORGO SECURITY OF OUR PEOPLE, SECURITY OF OUR ALLIES.

. IT IS NOT LATE TO COME TO A STOP YET. ALTERNATIVE
TO DANGEROUS STRENGTHENING ARMS RACE EXISTS AND WE PUT IT
FORWARD. YOU PERHAPS KNOW THAT IN MY SPEECH AT THE VERY
END OF LAST YEAR I SUGGESTED TO AGREE UPON MUTUAL REFUSAL
OF PRODUCTION OF NEUTRON WEAPON. I HEREBY RECONFIRM THIS
PROPOSITION TO THE POWERS OF THE WEST AGAIN. WE ARE
READY TO CONCLUDE AN APPROPRIATE AGREEMENT AND TO PROCEED
TO NEGOTIATIONS ON THE MATTER ANY TIME.

. I WOULD WISH TO HOPE THAT YOU WILL REGARD ALL THE
ABOVESAIID CONSIDERATIONS WITH ALL ATTENTION AND THAT WE
WILL BE ABLE TO REACH MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING RELATING TO
REFUSAL OF NEUTRON WEAPON, WHILE IRREVERSIBLE STEPS ARE
NOT MADE YET.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USNATO 00462 02 OF 02 161943Z

END TEXT OF LETTER. GLITMAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MDW, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USNATO000462
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780023-0635
Format: TEL
From: USNATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780158/aaaabwrx.tel
Line Count: 221
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a48563e3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 USNATO 416
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3766091
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BREZHNEV LETTER TO ICELANDIC PRIME MINISTER ON ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON
TAGS: PARM, UR, IC, NATO
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a48563e3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014